



SMALL CRAFT

by

C. FOX SMITH

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SMALL CRAFT

C. FOX SMITH

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SAILOR BALLADS AND CHANTYS

BY

C. FOX SMITH

AUTHOR OF "SAILOR TOWN," ETC.



NEW YORK

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DFW

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I: CHANTYS

/

SMALL CRAFT

SMALL CRAFT

WHEN Drake sailed out from Devon to break King
Philip's pride,
He had great ships at his bidding and little ones
beside,
"Revenge" was there and "Lion," and others known
to fame,
And likewise he had Small Craft (which hadn't any
name!).

Small Craft—Small Craft—to harry and to flout
'em!
Small Craft—Small Craft—you cannot do without
'em!
Their deeds are unrecorded, their names are never
seen,
But we know that there were Small Craft—because
there must have been!

When Nelson was blockading for three long years
and more,
With many a bluff first-rater and oaken "Seventy-
four,"
To share the fun and fighting, the good chance and
the bad,
Oh, he had also Small Craft—because he must have
had!

Upon the skirts of battle from Sluys to Trafalgar
We know that there were Small Craft—because
there always are!
Yacht, sweeper, sloop and drifter—to-day as yes-
terday
The big ships fight the battles—but the Small Craft
clear the way!

They scout before the squadrons when mighty fleets
engage;
They glean War's dreadful harvest when the fight
has ceased to rage;
Too great they count no hazard, no task beyond
their power;
And merchantmen bless Small Craft a hundred times
an hour!

SMALL CRAFT

In Admirals' despatches their names are seldom
heard,
They justify their being by more than written word;
In battle, toil and tempest, and dangers manifold,
The doughty deeds of Small Craft will never all be
told.

Scant ease and scantier leisure—they take no heed
of these,
For men lie hard in Small Craft when storm is on
the seas;
A long watch and a weary from dawn to set of sun—
The men who serve in Small Craft, their work is
never done.

And if, as chance may have it, some bitter day they
lie
Out-classed, out-gunned, out-numbered, with nought
to do but die,
When the last gun's out of action, good-bye to ship
and crew—
But men die hard in Small Craft, as they will always
do!

Oh, Death comes once to each man, and the game it
pays for all,
And Duty is but Duty, in great ship and in small,

And it will not vex their slumbers, or make less sweet
their rest,
Though there's never a big black headline for Small
Craft going west.

Great ships and mighty captains—to these their
meed of praise
For patience, skill and daring, and loud victorious
days,—
To every man his portion, as is both right and fair,
But oh! forget not Small Craft, for they have done
their share.

Small Craft—Small Craft—from Scapa Flow to
Dover;
Small Craft—Small Craft—all the wide world over;
At risk of war and shipwreck, torpedo, mine and
shell—
All honour be to Small Craft, for oh, they've earned
it well!

A BALLAD OF OLD AND NEW

As I went down through Portsmouth Town, with my
bundle in my hand,
I met a chap in a pigtail rig, just newly come to
land;
I met a fellow of an old-style build, with a look both
bold and free,—
With varnished hat and buckled shoes, like the men
of the Old Navee.

“What news, what news, young fellow,” he said, “of
rigging loft and yard;
What ships are new, and what are built this year at
Buckler’s Hard?
And is the cry, ‘More frigates,’ still, as I mind it used
to be?
Do England’s oaks build ships this day like the ships
of the Old Navee?

“And when these things you’ve answered all, why,
then, lad, tell me true,
Who stands this day where Nelson stood (if any so
may do),

What prizes late our Fleet has won, what victories
gained at sea;

Does England hold what she fought for of old, in
the days of the Old Navee?"

* * * * *

"By Tyne and Clyde and Merseyside our ships lie
keel by keel,

And a man must stop his ears to hear the hammers
on the steel;

By Buckler's Hard nought now you hear but song
of bird and tree,

But the ships of grey will be first in the fray like the
ships of the Old Navee.

"Dogger and Bight and Falklands fight, and one or
two beside,

And Jutland Bank shall one day rank with the
names of Nelson's pride;

But that's a tale is all too hard for simple lads like
me,—

Not word, but deed, is the sailor's creed, as it was
in the Old Navee.

"But when the time for deeds is come, we've fighting
lads a few,

Can hit and hold, both swift and bold, the same's
they used to do,

Can hunt the pirate submarine from broad and
narrow sea,
And strike the raider in his lair as they did in the
Old Navee.

"So let the Navy have her fling, she'll show in the
Navy's way
Our frontier is the foeman's shore, to-day as yes-
terday:
For the fights that are fought on blue water will
win or lose the sea,
As it was when Hawke and Nelson sailed in the
ships of the Old Navee.

"And all we ask is to finish our task some day with
a free sky o'er us,
A day fair and fine, with a clear skyline, and a foe
that will stand before us:
We've a man from Wexford that we know full well
for as good as any may be,
And the bulldog grip that never lets slip, as it was in
the Old Navee!"

As I went down through Portsmouth Town, a cold
rain falling fast,
I saw the flap of old "Victory's" flag, where she
dreams of victories past,

And this was the word the salt wind bore that blew
from the English sea:

“Be it steam or sail, you weather the gale by the
New as the Old Navee!”

SQUAREHEADS

"I NEVER did 'ave no use for Germans" (said Bill
the bosun to me,
As he sat on the after hatchway coaming, smoking
and drinking his tea);
"Never did 'ave no use for square'eads, sonny, an'
that's the truth,
Since I went to sea in the old 'Lord Clive,' back there
in the days o' my youth.

"Danes I 'ave knowed, an' Swedes I 'ave knowed, as
was white men through and through,
Norwegian—nigger—yeller an' brown—an' hard-
case citizens too:
I've sailed in my time with most o' the brands, Dago,
Dutchman, and Finn,
But never a decent shipmate yet did I strike in a
German skin.

"Never the feller a man 'd choose to be with in a
watch together,
Never the feller you'd like to know was around in
the worst o' weather,

Never the chap as you'd want by your side when
 caught aback in a gale,
Or layin' aloft in your shirt, maybe, off the Plate
 there shortenin' sail.

"All very well for a harbour job they are, as I make
 no doubt,
Or 'andin' plates in a restorong, or sweepin' the
 cuddy out;
But I never did 'ave no use for the beggars, though
 why I can 'ardly say,
An' I always used to 'ammer 'em good, which I'm
 glad to 'ave done to-day!

* * * * *

"An' I wish I may lie where the lost ships lie that
 never mounted a gun,
Them as was raked with shrapnel fire—they could
 neither fight nor run;
Them as spread the sea with their dead when the
 day was sunny and fine,
Or went down slow as the dark come on, with their
 guts ripped out by a mine.

"I wish I may lie where them ships lie, the little
 ships an' big,
Liner an' tank an' leaky tramp, barge an' schooner
 an' brig,

SQUAREHEADS

The smacks an' Frenchy onion boats, an' the poor
crews they bore,
Murdered in sight of open day by square'eads makin'
war!

"I wish I may lie where them ships lie, an' no more
sail the sea,
An' drink the drink them dead men drank, poor
sailormen like me,—
So let me drink if I forget, an' so for ever lie,
If ever I ship with square'eads more until the day
I die.

"An' if ever I take a German's pay again, in steam
or sail,
Or 'andle German cargo more, baulk or barrel or
bale,
If ever I put a finger o' mine on stuff a German owns,
Or 'elp to fill a German till with workin' o' my bones,

"If ever I risk this life o' mine, as I 'ave done before,
To bring some Bremen merchant 'ome 'is nitrates or
'is ore,
I wish I may dream o' nothin' but sinkin' ships an'
drownin' men,
An' wake out o' the dream, an' sleep, an' dream it
all again,—

“Dead bodies liftin’ on the swell,—strong seamen
once like me,—
An’ fellers wounded, freezin’ to death in open boats
at sea,—
Babies, an’ girls with long wet hair, an’ mothers mad
with woe,
The devil’s job—the square’eads’ job—I seen it
an’ I know!

“I never did ’ave no use for Germans—an’ when this
war is done,
There may be those that will forget—well, I shall
not be one!
And by them ships I pass my word—an’ by them
souls I swear—
There’ll be ’ot times in sailor-town when I meet a
square’ead there!”

THE NORTH ATLANTIC TRADE

As I was walking beside the docks I met a pal of mine

I sailed with once on the Colonies' run in Thomson's
White Star Line;

Said I: "What cheer—what brings you here?"—

"Why, 'aven't you 'eard," he said.

"I'm under the Windsor 'ouse flag now in the North
Atlantic trade.

We sweep a bit an' we fight a bit (an' that's what
we like the best),

But a towin' job or a salvage job, it all goes in wi'
the rest;

When we aren't too busy upsettin' old Fritz an' his
frightfulness blockade,

A bit of all sorts don't come amiss in the North
Atlantic trade."

"And how does old Atlantic look?" "Oh, round an'
about the same;

'E 'asn't seemed to alter a lot since I've been in the
game;

'E's about as big as 'e always was, an' 'e's pretty
well just as wet
(Or if there's some parts drier 'n the rest, well,
I 'aven't struck none yet!)

There's the same old bust-up, same old mess when
a green sea breaks inboard,
An' the equinoctials roarin' by the same as they've
always roared;
An' the west wind playin' the same old larks 'e's
been at since the world was made,
They've a peach of a time, 'ave sailormen in the
North Atlantic trade."

"And who's your skipper and what is he like?"

"Oh, well, if you want to know,
I'm sailin' under a hard-case mate as I sailed with
years ago;
He's big an' bucko an' full o' beans, the same as he
used to be
When I knowed 'im last in the windbag days when
first I followed the sea.
'E was worth two men at the lee for brace, an' three
at the bunt of a sail,
'E'd a voice you could 'ear to the royal yards in the
teeth of a Cape 'Orn gale;

But now 'e's a full-blown lootenant an' wears the
twisted braid,
Commandin' one of 'is Majesty's ships in the North
Atlantic trade."

"And what is the ship you're sailin' in?"—"Oh she's
a bit of a terror,
She ain't no bloomin' levvyathan, an' that's no fatal
error;
She scoops the seas like a gravy spoon when the
winds are up an' blowin',
But Fritz he loves 'er above a bit when 'er fightin'
fangs are showin'!
The liners go their 'aughty way, and the cruisers
take their ease,
But where would they be if it wasn't for us, with the
water up to our knees?
We're wadin' when their soles are wet, we're swim-
min' when they wade,—
Oh, I tell you small craft gets it a treat in the North
Atlantic trade."

"And what is the port you're plyin' to?"—"When
the last long trick is done
There'll some come back to the old 'ome port—
'ere's 'opin' I'll be one!—

But some'll 'ave made a new landfall an' sighted an-
other shore,
An' it ain't no use to watch for them, for they won't
come 'ome no more:
There ain't no 'arbour dues to pay when once they're
over the bar,
Moored bow an' stern in a quiet berth where the
lost three-deckers are:
An' there's Nelson 'oldin' 'is one 'and out, an' wel-
comin' them that's made
The roads o' Glory an' the port o' Death in the
North Atlantic trade."

ADMIRAL DUGOUT

HE had done with fleets and squadrons, with the
restless, roaming seas,

He had found the quiet haven he desired,
And he lay there to his moorings with the dignity
and ease

Most becoming to Rear-Admirals (retired).
He was reared 'mid "Spit and Polish," he was bred
to "stick and string"—

All the things the ultra-moderns never name;
But a wind blew up to seaward, and it meant the
Real Thing,
And he had to slip his cable when it came.

So he hied him up to London, for to hang about
Whitehall,

And he sat upon the steps there soon and late;
He importuned night and morning, he bombarded
great and small,

From messengers to Ministers of State.
He was like a guilty conscience, he was like a ghost
unlaid,

He was like a debt of which you can't get rid,

Till the Powers that Be, despairing, in a fit of temper said,

“For the Lord’s sake give him something”—and they did!

They commissioned him a trawler with a high and raking bow,

Black and workmanlike as any pirate craft,

With a crew of steady seamen very handy in a row,

And a brace of little barkers fore and aft.

And he blessed the Lord his Maker when he faced the North Sea sprays,

And exceedingly extolled his lucky star,

That had given his youth renewal in the evening of his days,

(With the rank of Captain Dugout, R.N.R.)

He is jolly as a sandboy, he is happier than a king,

And his trawler is the darling of his heart,

(With her cuddy like a cupboard where a kitten couldn’t swing,

And a scent of fish that simply won’t depart).

He has found upon occasion sundry targets for his guns,

He could tell you tales of mine and submarine;

ADMIRAL DUGOUT

Oh, the holes he's in and out of, and the glorious
risks he runs

Turn his son (who's in a Super-Dreadnought)
green.

He is fit as any fiddle, he is hearty, hale and
tanned,

He is proof against the coldest gales that blow,
He has never felt so lively since he got his first com-
mand,

(Which is rather more than forty years ago).
And of all the joyful picnics of his wild and wander-
ing youth,

Little dust-ups 'tween Taku and Zanzibar,
There was none to match the picnic, he declares in
sober sooth,

That he has as Captain Dugout, R.N.R.

“SHIPS THAT PASS”:

AN EPISODE OF THE CRUISER PATROL.

THERE are ships that pass in the night-time, some
poet has told us how,
But a ship that passed in the day-time is the one
I'm thinking of now,
Where the seas roll green from the Arctic and the
wind comes keen from the Pole,
'TWEEN Rockall Bank and the Shetlands, up North
on the long patrol.

We sighted her one day early; the forenoon watch
was begun,
There was mist like wool on the water, and a glimpse
of a pale cold sun,
And she came through the dim grey weather—a
thing of wonder and gleam,
From the port o' the Past on a bowline, close-hauled
on a wind of dream.

The rust of years was upon her—she was weathered
by many a gale—
The flag of a Dago republic went up to her peak at
our hail;
But I knew her—Lord God! I knew her, as how
could I help but know
The ship that I served my time in, no matter how
long ago!

I'd have climbed to her royals blindfold, I'd have
known her spars in a crowd;
Aloft and alow, I knew her, brace and halliard and
shroud—
From the scroll-work under her stern-ports to the
paint on her figure-head—
And the shout, "All hands," on her maindeck would
have tumbled me up from the dead.

She moved like a queen on the water, with the grace
that was hers of yore,
The sun on her shining canvas—what had she to do
with war,
With a world that is full of trouble and seas that
are stained with crime?
She came like a dream remembered, dreamt once in
a happier time.

She was youth, and its sorrow that passes—the light,
the laughter, the joy,
The South, and the small white cities, and the care-
free heart of a boy,
The farewell flash of the Fastnet to light you the
whole world round,
And the hoot of the tug at parting—and the song
of the homeward bound.

The sun, and the flying-fish weather—night, and a
fiddle's tune—
And palms, and the warm maize-yellow of a low
West Indian moon—
Storm in the high South latitudes—and the boom
of a Trade-filled sail—
And the anchor watch in the tropics, and the old
Sou' Spainer's tale.

Was it the lap of the wave I heard or the chill wind's
cry,
Or a snatch of a deep-sea chantey I knew in the
years gone by?
Was it the whine of the gear in the sheaves, or the
seagulls' call,
Or the ghost of my shipmates' voices, tallying on
to the fall?

* * * * *

I went through her papers duly—and no one, I
hope, could see
A freight of the years departed was the cargo she
bore for me!
I talked with her Dago captain while we searched
her for contraband,
And . . . I longed for one grip of her wheel-
spokes like a grip of a friend's right hand.

And I watched while her helm went over, and the
sails were sheeted home,
And under her moving forefoot the bubbles broke
into foam,
Till she faded from sight in the greyness—a thing
of wonder and gleam,
For the port of the Past on a bowline—closehauled
on a wind of dream!

“IN PRIZE”

A SHIP was built in Glasgow, and oh, she looked a daisy—

(Just the way that some ships do!)

An’ the only thing against ’er was she allus steered so crazy

(An’ it’s true, my Johnnie Bowline, true!)

They sent ’er out in ballast to Oregon for lumber,
An’ before she dropped ’er pilot she all but lost ’er number.

They sold ’er into Norway because she steered so funny,

An’ she nearly went to glory before they drawed the money.

They sold ’er out o’ Norway—they sold ’er into Chile,

An’ Chile got a bargain because she steered so silly.

They chartered 'er to Germans with a bunch o'
greasers forrard;
Old shellbacks wouldn't touch 'er because she steered
so 'orrid.

She set a course for Bremen with contraband in-
side 'er,
An' she might 'ave got there sometime if a cruiser
'adn't spied er.

She nearly 'drowned the boarders because she cut
such capers,
But they found she was a German through inspectin'
of her papers.

So they put a crew on board 'er, which was both
right an' lawful,
An' the prize crew 'ad a picnic because she steered
so awful.

But they brought 'er into Kirkwall, an' then they
said, "Lord lumme
If I ever see an 'ooker as steered so kind o' rummy!"

But she'll fetch her price at auction, for oh, she
looks a daisy.

(Just the way that some ships do!)

An' the chap as tops the biddin' won't know she
steers so crazy

(But it's true, my Johnnie Bowline, true!)

THE FIGHTING MERCHANTMAN

As I looked over the water—as I looked over the
foam,
I saw an old-time packet-ship come cheerily plung-
ing home;
I saw the holes in her riddled sails, and the shine of
a little brass gun
On either side of her battered poop in the light of
the westering sun.

I hailed her over the water, I hailed her over the
tide:
“What news of war down Channel, what news from
the ocean wide?”
And from her shadowy bulwarks a shadowy voice
replied:
“Oh, homeward from the Indies bound, abeam of
Tuskar light,
We met a saucy privateer—she bade us strike or
fight;

And we sent her home with a pain in her ribs, and
her maintopmast shot down,
To l'arn her to meddle with his Majesty's mails,
bound home to Falmouth town!"

(Frigate or sloop or chasse-marée, let 'em bang us
if they can,
They will maybe find not much to their mind in a
fighting merchantman!)

As I looked over the water, as I looked over the
foam,
I there did see a ship's longboat come wearily labour-
ing home;
I saw the crew bend to their oars, like tired men they
rowed,
As gunwale deep in the sunset tide she wallowed with
her load.

I hailed her over the water, I hailed her over the
tide:

"What news of war down Channel, what news from
the ocean wide?"

And in her stern sheets standing, a bull-voiced mate
replied:

“Oh, homeward bound from the River Plate, abeam
of Tuskar light,
We met a pirate submarine at the coming on of
night,
She knew her game was safe to play, as safe ’twill
be again
When the game is not with fighting craft, but peace-
ful merchantmen.

“They raked us first with shrapnel fire above deck
and below,
They slipped a tin-fish into our bilge and left us
sinking slow;
We left our skipper on the bridge with a bullet in
his head;
We’ve our wounded here in the boat’s bottom, and
most by now are dead.

“Our foes, they say, when war is done, shall pay us
ton for ton;
But better now is shot for shot and gun to answer
gun;
Give England’s ships their fighting chance—then
let him catch who can,
He will maybe find not much to his mind in a
fighting merchantman!”

BILLY'S YARN

"Oo seen her off?" . . .

"Me," says the tide,
"I 'ad to, for why, there was no one beside;
For sailor-folks' women, they're busy enough,
'Thout 'angin' round pier-'eds to see their chaps off.
The gulls all about 'er they wrangled an' cried,
An' I seen 'er off," says the Liverpool tide.

"Oo waved 'er good-bye?" . . .

"Me," says old Tuskar,
"When the sun it went down an' the light it got
dusker,
(With a sea gettin' up an' the wind blowin' keen),
An' the smoke of 'er funnels could 'ardly be seen,
An' the last of the sunset was red in the sky . . .
With the first of my flashes I waved 'er good-bye."

"Oo seen 'er sink?" . . .

"Me," says the sun,
"At the top o' my climbin' I seen the thing done . . .

I seen 'er 'eave to, an' I seen 'er 'ull shiver,
Settle, an' stumble, an' tremble, an' quiver,
An' 'er stern it went up, an' 'er bow it went down,
An' the most of 'er people they just 'ad to drown,
An' I'd never a cloud for to shut out the sight,
So I seen 'er sink," says the sun in 'is might.

"Oo seen the last of 'er?" . . .

"Us," says the crew,
All that was left out o' twenty-and-two,
"We seen the last of 'er—floatin' around
On a bottom-up boat among dead uns an' drowned—
We seen 'er waterways runnin' with blood—
We seen poor mates of ours shot where they stood—
But them chaps as done it, I tell you now true,
They ain't seen the last of us yet," says the crew,
"No, you bet your sweet life," says what's left o' the
crew.

PHILOSOPHY

“LAST night in the Baltic Tavern tap
I met,” Mike said, “a longshore chap
And said, ‘Don’t sailerin’ look queer
With all them mines an’ suchlike gear?
If I was you,’ ’e says, says ’e,
‘I’d take a shore job same as me,
An’ leave this trouble that’s around
For them that’s fond o’ gettin’ drowned.’

“‘No, no,’ I says, ‘I ain’t a-givin’
It up for any square’ead livin’,
The way I puts it in my ’ead
Is—no man’s done until ’e’s dead,
An’ if it comes to dyin’, sure,
A man dies once, an’ then no more.’

“I says, ‘When ships ’as left off goin’,
An’ grass on London docks is growin’,
(The same’s it is, so I’ve ’eard say,
On all them ’Amburg wharves this day),

When Lloyd's is broke an' on their uppers,
 An' all the owners in the scuppers,
 Why, then,' I says, 'I might be lookin'
 For a job o' cartin' coals, or cookin',

Or washin' pots, or sellin' tapes,
 Or leadin' bears, or learnin' apes,
 But since, as I 'ear tell, so far
 There's ships still passin' Mersey Bar,
 An' one or two comes in each day
 To London Docks, so I've 'eard say,
 An' ships can't sail without no crew,—
 So long as they sail, I sail too.

“‘If you, young man, 'ad follered the sea
 Your 'ole life long, the same as me,
 'Ad knowed it wakin' an' asleep,
 An' seen God's wonders in the deep,
 I guess you'd not be rattled much
 By mines or submarines or such,
 Or care a bloomin' finger snap
 For no fool Kaiser or such chap. . . .

“‘Besides,' I says, 'when all is said,
 Just think o' them poor chaps that's dead—
 Poor pals o' mine as 'ad to die—
They took their chances . . . so do I!’”

THE BALLAD OF THE "DINKINBAR"

It was the steamship "Dinkinbar,"
From the Gulf of Mexico
For Liverpool in time of war
With a thousand mules below,
And a bunch of polyglot muleteers
To tend on them also.

A swarthy breed from Eagle Butte,
And a greaser from Brazil,
And Daly of the broken nose,
And Ike, and Texas Bill,

In divers tongues that yarned and swore
And wrangled o'er their play,
As they dealt their decks of greasy cards
To pass the hours away,

And talked of how to burn good pay
And play the blooming fool
Among the wenches and the sharks
In the port of Liverpool.

But Texas Bill a bitter laugh
He'd laugh and shake his head:
"It's me for a new style jamboree
When I strike land," he said.

"My brother lies in deep water
Not over far from here,
Where a U-boat sank both ship and men,
A bit beyond Cape Clear.

"They left him to drown with his drownin' mules
In the light of open day,
An' I guess I'll not sleep easy o' nights
While that score's yet to pay.

"So I'm goin' in for a khaki suit
When I get in from sea,
I kin shift my birthplace north o' the line
As handy as kin be,
An' . . . I guess there'll sure be a fightin' job
For a big long thing like me!"

* * * * *

It was the steamship "Dinkinbar,"
At the stormy end o' the year
That came in sight of the Bull and Cow
Which are beside Cape Clear.

And soon as rang the lookout's cry
That hailed the sight of land,
Oh, they were aware of a U-boat there
That signalled them to stand.

She fired a shot across their hawse
And they had to heave to them,
For she could make her fifteen knots,
And the "Dinkinbar" but ten,
And she had her machine gun ready to fire
On all but unarmed men.

Her captain he came over the side,
A cold-eyed swaggering Hun
That wore the Iron Cross on his breast
To tell of murders done,—

And his squarehead crew brought up their bombs
To send the ship below
With the poor living things she bore
That knew not friend from foe.

It was a British ship of war
Was swiftly drawing near,
For she had word of a submarine
Was lurking off Cape Clear.

She came from the South with a bone in her mouth,
Her shot sang over the sea,
And straight for the pirate's conning tower
It sped like a hiving bee,
It struck—it smashed it like a shell—
That down like a stone went she.

Then the pirate captain ran to the rail
To signal to his crew,
But all he saw was a smear of oil
On the water's face that grew.

And first he swore and gnawed his lip,
And glanced around in fear,
Till a thought came into his mind again
That brought him better cheer.

"Are not the English easy folk
With pirates ta'en in war?
And my luck is good that safe I stand
On the deck of the 'Dinkinbar.'"

He turned—he saw the muleteers
Come surging from below,
(Like a rustlers' crowd you see on the screen
At a moving picture show).

And once he looked on Texas Bill,
And then he turned and ran,
For the look he saw it was not good
To see on the face of man.

Then in and out among the boats,
By hatch and alleyway,
Hunter and hunted, to and fro
In deadly chase sped they.

And through the engine-room where stilled
Was now the engine's clang,
On steel ladder and steel grating
Their footsteps slipped and rang,

Till in the screw shaft's stifling dark,
With spent and gasping breath
The U-boat's captain turned at last
To pay his dues to death. . . .

And twice Bill lifted his hand to strike,
And twice he turned aside,
But his brother's blood it called so loud
It would not be denied,
And down in the dark (like those he slew)
The U-boat's captain died.

The cruiser's boat came under the side,
They hailed her with a cheer,
And Texas Bill looked over the rail
And called both loud and clear,
"Come up, come up, now, Lootenant,
But you'll find no prisoner here.

"For Texas law is life for life
Alike in peace and war,
And life for life has paid this day
On board o' the 'Dinkinbar.'"

GOOD LUCK

THE hour was near for starting
Ere Vimy ridge was won,
And we said "Good luck" at parting
As we had often done
In folly, sport or fun.

(For love and pride and passion
With speech accord but ill,
And if we had skill to fashion
Brave words to speak our fill,
We should be speaking still).

All dreams men strive and sigh for,
Or lose beyond recall,
The things men live and die for,
The great things and the small—
Our "Good luck" meant them all.

"To each his dear ambition
As unto each seems best,
Love's crown or fate's fruition,
The fame, the medalled breast . . . (a) (a)
And to the dead their rest!"

THE DEFAULTER

THE regimental jackdaw 'as a bright an' beady
eye;
'E sits upon the tent-pole an' 'e winks both bold an'
sly:
'E says: "You bloomin' idiot, you, to go an' get
C.B.!"
An' I wish I was the jackdaw, an' I wish that 'e was
me!

The regimental jackdaw, 'e is like a bloomin' lord,
'E 'ops it when 'e thinks 'e will, an' no one speaks a
word:
'E takes 'is 'ook without no pass, 'e don't come 'ome
to tea,
An' I wish I was the jackdaw, an' I wish that e' was
me!

The regimental jackdaw, 'e can always speak 'is
mind:
'E tells the Colonel what 'e thinks when thus 'e
feels inclined,

'E sauces of the Adjutant as 'andy as can be,
An' I wish I was the jackdaw, an' I wish that 'e was
me!

The regimental jackdaw, 'e 's the jolliest thing I've
seen,

'E 'as no pack to carry an' 'e 'as no pipe to clean,
'E 's breakin' rules the 'ole day long an' never gets
C.B.—

An' I wish I was the jackdaw, an' I wish that 'e
was me!

THE LITTLE THINGS

I USED to be a peaceful chap as didn't ask for trouble,

An' as for rows an' fightin', why, I'd mostly rather not,

But now I'd charge an army single-'anded at the double,

An' it's all along o' little things I've learned to feel so 'ot.

It's 'orrid seein' burnin' farms, which I 'ave often seen 'ere,

An' fields all stinks an' shell-'oles, an' the dead among the flowers,

But the thing I've 'ated seein' all the bloomin' time I've been 'ere

Is the little gardens rooted up—the same as might be ours.

It's bad to see the chattos—which means castles—gone to ruins,

An' big cathedrals knocked to bits as used to look that fine,

But what puts me in a paddy more than all them
sort o' doin's

Is the little 'ouses all in 'eaps—the same as might
be mine.

An' when the what's-it line is bust an' we go rompin'
through it,

An' knock the lid off Potsdam an' the Kaiser off
'is throne,

Why, what'll get our monkey up an' give us 'eart
to do it?

Just thinkin' o' them little things as might have
been our own,

(An' most of all the little kids as might 'ave been
our own!)

THE SONG OF THE MILL

As by the pool I wandered that lies so clear and still
With tall old trees about it, hard by the silent mill
Whose ancient oaken timbers no longer creak and
 groan
With the roar of wheel and water, and grind of stone
 on stone.

The idle mill-race slumbered beneath the mouldering
 wheel,
The pale March sunlight gilded no motes of floating
 meal,
But the stream went singing onward, went singing
 by the weir—
And this, or something like it, was the song I seemed
 to hear:—

“By Teviot, Tees and Avon, by Esk and Ure and
 Tweed,
Here’s many a trusty henchman would rally to your
 need;

By Itchen, Test and Waveney, by Tamar, Trent
and Ouse,

Here's many a loyal servant will help you if you
choose.

"Do they no longer need us who needed us of yore?
We stood not still aforetime when England marched
to war;

Like those our wind-driven brothers, far seen o'er
weald and fen,

We ground the wheat and barley to feed stout
Englishmen.

"You call the men of England, their strength, their
toil, their gold,

But us you have not summoned, who served your
sires of old;

For service high or humble, for tribute great and
small,

You call them and they answer—but us you do not
call.

"Yet we no hoarded fuel of mine or well require,
That drive your fleets to battle or light the poor
man's fire;

We need no white-hot furnace for tending night and
day,

No power of harnessed lightnings to speed us on
our way.

“By Tavy, Dart and Derwent, by Wharfe and Usk
and Nidd,

Here’s many a trusty vassal is yours when you shall
bid,

With the strength of English rivers to push the
wheels along,

And the roar of many a mill-race to join the victory
song.”

THE FIVE RICKS

FIVE ricks in a row
Stand in my father's field, I know,
Five ricks beside the hedge
That marks the long field's topmost edge . . .
There they stand; from there you see
Coppice, cottage, field and tree,
The shining vane on the church steeple,
And houses full of decent people
I've known since I was a little chap,
Good folks that sometimes say, mayhap,
"I wonder, now, what young Jim's doin'
Out there in all that noise and ruin" . . .

FIVE ricks in a row
Stand in my father's field, I know,
And over them there's a blue sky
Where small white clouds go floating high,
Like shell-bursts round a battle-plane . . .
But night'll come and the light'll wane,
Bats'll flit, and not a sound
Be heard in all the fields around,

But a hunting owl, and a little breeze
That makes a rustling in the trees.
And by the ricks and round about
The lean grey rats slip in and out,
Here and there on every hand,
Like snipers out in No Man's Land.

If times was what times used to be,
What sport there for old Vic and me!
The same old girl, the same old dear,
That's been my pal now many a year,
Since first I bought her, one Spring fair,
A six weeks' pup from a gipsy there . . .
But now she's growing old and grey
At home, and I am far away,
And there ain't no games for her, I reckon,
Though the night seems just about to beckon
For little dogs to hunt their fill
Of rats and such-like things to kill;
And so Vic shakes herself, and sighs, turns three
Times round and down she lies,
And stretches out before the blaze
Her old rheumatic bones, and lays
Between her paws her grizzled head
And torn ears, waiting for my tread.

BULLINGTON

It was in the high midsummer, and the sun was shining strong,
And the lane was rather flinty, and the lane was rather long,
When—up and down the gentle hills beside the strippling Test—
I chanced to come to Bullington and stayed a while to rest.

It was drowned in peace and quiet, as the river reeds are drowned
In the water clear as crystal, flowing by with scarce a sound,
And the air was like a posy with the sweet haymaking smells,
And the roses and Sweet Williams and Canterbury Bells.

Far away as some strange planet seemed the old world's dust and din,
And the trout in sun-warmed shallows hardly seemed to stir a fin;

And there's never a clock to tell you how the hur-
rying world goes on
In the little ivied steeple down in drowsy Bullington.

Small and sleepy, there it nestled, seeming far from
hastening Time
As a teeny-tiny village in some quaint old nursery
rhyme;
And a teeny-tiny river by a teeny-tiny weir
Sang a teeny-tiny ditty that I stayed awhile to hear.

"Oh, the stream runs to the river, and the river to
the sea,
But the reedy banks of Bullington are good enough
for me;
Oh, the lane runs to the highway, and the highway
o'er the down,
But it's better here in Bullington than there in
London town."
Then high above an aeroplane in humming flight
went by,
With the droning of its engines filling all the cloud-
less sky,
And like the booming of a knell across that perfect
day
There came the gun's dull thunder from the ranges
far away.

And while I lay and listened, oh, the river's sleepy
tune
Seemed to change its rippling music, like the cuck-
oo's stave in June;
And the cannon's distant thunder, and the engine's
war-like drone
Seemed to mingle with its burthen in a solemn
undertone.

"Oh, the stream runs to the river, and the river to
the sea,
And there's war on land and water, and there's
work for you and me!
And on many a field of glory there are gallant lives
laid down
As well for tiny Bullington as mighty London
town!"

So I roused me from my daydream, for I knew the
song spoke true
That it isn't time for dreaming while there's duty
still to do;
And I turned into the highway where it meets the
flinty lane,
And the world of wars and sorrows was about me
once again.

THE GIPSY SOLDIER

THE gipsy wife came to my door with pegs and
brooms to sell

They make by many a roadside fire and many a
greenwood dell,

With bee-skeps and with baskets wove of osier, rush
and sedge,

And withies from the river-bed and brambles from
the hedge.

With her stately grace like Pharaoh's queen (for
all her broken shoon),

You'd marvel one so proud and tall should ever
ask a boon;

But "livin's dear for us poor folk," and "money
can't be had,"

And her "man's in Mesopotamia," and "times is cruel
bad."

Yes, times is cruel bad, we know, and passing strange
also,

And it's strange as anything I've heard that gipsy
men should go

To lands through which their forebears trod from
some unknown abode

The way that ended long ago upon the Portsmouth
Road.

I wonder if the Eastern skies and Eastern odours
seem

Familiar to that gipsy man as memories of a dream;
Does 'Tigris' flow stir ancient dreams from im-
memorial rest

Ere ever gipsy poached the trout of Itchen or of
Test?

Does something in him seem to know those red and
arid lands

Where dust of ancient cities sleeps beneath the
drifted sands?

Do Kurdish girls with lustrous eyes beneath their
drooping lids

And Eastern babes look strangely like the Missis
and the kids?

I wonder if the waving palms, when desert winds do
blow,

In their dry rustling seem to sing a song he used to
know,

Or does he only curse the heat, and wish that he
were laid

Beneath the spread of Rufus' oaks or Harewood's
beechen shade?

Well, luck be with the gipsy man, and lead him
safely home

To the old familiar caravan and ways he used to
roam,

And bring him, as it brought his sires from their
far first abode

To where the gipsy camp-fires burn along the Ports-
mouth Road.

MERCHANTMEN

ALL honour be to merchantmen,
And ships of all degree
In warlike dangers manifold
Who sail and keep the sea,—
In peril of unlitten coast
And death-besprinkled foam,
Who daily dare a hundred deaths
To bring their cargoes home.

A liner out of Liverpool—a tanker from the
Clyde—
A hard-run tramp from anywhere—a tug from Mer-
seyside—
A cattle-boat from Birkenhead—a coaler from the
Tyne—
All honour be to merchantmen while any star shall
shine!

All honour be to merchantmen,
And ships both great and small,
The swift and strong to run their race,
And smite their foes withal;
—68—

The little ships that sink or swim,
And pay the pirates' toll,
Unarmoured save by valiant hearts
And strong in nought but soul.

All honour be to merchantmen
So long as tides shall run,
Who gave the seas their glorious dead
From rise to set of sun,—
All honour be to merchantmen,
While England's name shall stand,
Who sailed and fought, and dared and died,
And served and saved their land.

A sailing ship from Liverpool—a tanker from the
Clyde—
A schooner from the West countrie—a tug from
Merseyside—
A fishing smack from Grimsby town—a coaler from
the Tyne—
All honour be to merchantmen while sun and moon
do shine!

THE OPEN BOAT

WHEN this 'ere war is done (says Dan) and all
the fightin's through,
There's some will pal with Fritz again as they've
been used to do . . .
But not me (says Dan the sailorman), not me (says
he),
Lord knows it's nippy in an open boat on winter
nights at sea!

When the last battle's lost an' won, an' won or
lost the game,
There's some'll think no 'arm to drink with square-
'eads just the same,—
But not me (says Dan the sailorman), an' if you
ask me why,
Lord knows it's thirsty in an open boat when the
water breaker's dry!

When all the bloomin' mines are swep' an' ships
are sunk no more,
There's some'll set them down to eat with Germans
as before,

But not me (says Dan the sailorman), not me for
one . . .

Lord knows it's 'ungry in an open boat when the
last biscuit's done!

When peace is signed an' treaties made an' trade
begins again,

There's some'll shake a German's 'and and never
see the stain,

But not me (says Dan the sailorman), not me, as
God's on high . . .

Lord knows it's bitter in an open boat to see your
shipmates die!

THE JOLLY BARGEMAN

I've put the 'old mare's tail in plaits—now ain't
she lookin' gay,
With ribbons in 'er mane likewise, you'd think it
First o' May;
For why? We're under Government, though it ain't
quite plain to me
If we're in the Civil Service or the Admiralitee!

An' it's "Gee hup, Mabel," an' we'll do the best
we're able,
For the country's took us over an' we're 'elpin' 'er
to win,
An' when the war is over, oh, we'll all lie down in
clover,
With a drink all together at the Navigation Inn!

I brought the news to Missis, an' to 'er these words
did say:
"Just chuck yon old broom-'andle an' a two-three
nails this way:

We're bound to 'ave a flag-staff for our old red,
white an' blue,
For now we're under Government we'll 'ave our en-
sign too."

The Navy is the Navy, an' it sails upon the sea,
The Army is the Army, an' on land it 'as to be;
There's the land an' there's the water, an' the Cut
comes in between,
An' I don't know what they'll call me if it ain't
an 'Orse Marine.

The Missis sits upon the barge, the same's she used
to sit,
But they'll 'ave 'er in the papers now for Doin' 'er
Bit:
An' I walk upon the tow-path 'ere as proud as any-
thing,
If I 'aven't got no uniform, I'm serving of the King.

An' it's "Gee hup, Mabel," oh, we'll do the best we're
able,
For the country's been an' called us, an' we've got to
'elp to win;
An' when the war is over, then we'll all lie down in
clover,
With a drink all together at the Navigation Inn!

"NEW HEAVENS—NEW EARTH":
CHRISTMAS, 1916

NIGH Bethlehem town poor shepherds heard
Beside their cotes a wondrous word:
"Nowell, Nowell" (the song did pour),
"Nowell, Nowell, from shore to shore,
Nowell, Nowell, the whole world o'er,
New Heavens, new Earth, for evermore!"

Is this, then, all—earth's countless dead,
Her homes whence Christmas joy is fled,
Such spilth of blood, such seas of tears—
The harvest of two thousand years?
And shall the War Star's blood-red light
Put out the Star of Bethlehem quite?
The cannon's thunder wholly drown
The Angels' song nigh Bethlehem town?

"Nowell, Nowell, from shore to shore,
For ever and for evermore!"
You Christmas bells, how shall you ring?
You Christmas choirs, how shall you sing,

When bells whose praise for centuries rung
To earth in molten heaps are flung,
And shrill the heedless bullet sings
By altars of the King of Kings,—
How shall you sing as oft of yore,

"Nowell, Nowell, the whole world o'er,
New Heavens, new Earth, for evermore?"

Be still, O doubting heart, recall
How but through Death came Life for all;
The road was trod for you and me
From Bethlehem—even to Calvary:
The light which round the Manger shone
More glorious lit the rolled-back stone.

You hero souls, rejoicing bear
Your gold, your frankincense and myrrh;
More rich than gold, more sweet than spice
The fragrance of your sacrifice!
You mourners, lift your weeping eyes,
Look up, behold the rifted skies:
Lo, darkest night hath brightest morn,
The glory of a world re-born!

And all the molten bells shall ring,
And all the broken hearts shall sing,

And all the risen dead shall raise
With one accord their endless praise:
“Nowell, Nowell” (the song shall pour),
“Nowell, Nowell, from shore to shore,
New Heavens, new Earth, the whole world o’er,
For ever, yea, for evermore!”

ST. ANDREW'S EVE

THE last night of November
All dreaming as I lay,
I saw a fisher toiling
In stormy seas and grey,—

A glimmering seine-net casting
In foam as white as wool . . .
And sometimes it came empty,
And sometimes it came full.

That port that fisher hailed from
Was the port of Heaven above:
The shining net he cast there
Was the net of Christ His love.

That seine it shone like silver
Or the Milky Way come down . . .
And, oh! the catch he took there
Was the souls of those who drown.

THE BALLAD OF THE RESURRECTION PACKET

Oh, she's in from the deep water, she's safe in port
once more,
With shot-'oles in 'er funnel which were not there
before;
Yes, she's 'ome, dearie, 'ome, an' we've 'alf the sea
inside!
Ought to 'ave sunk, but she couldn't if she tried.

An' it was "'Ome, dearie, 'ome, oh she'll bring us
'ome some day,
Rollin' both rails under in the old sweet way!
Freezin' in the foul weather, fryin' in the fine,
The resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse Line!"

If she'd been built for sinkin' she'd 'ave done it long
ago;
She's tried 'er best in every sea an' all the winds
that blow;
In 'urricanes at Galveston, pamperos off the Plate,
An' icy Cape 'Orn snorters which freeze you while
you wait.

THE BALLAD OF THE RESURRECTION PACKET

She's been ashore at Vallipo, Algoa Bay likewise,
She's broke 'er screw-shaft off Cape Race an' stove
 'er bows in ice;
She's lost 'er deck-load overboard an' 'alf 'er bul-
 warks too,
An' she's come in with fire aboard, smokin' like a
 flue.

But it's "'Ome, dearie, 'ome, oh she gets there just
 the same,
Reekin', leakin', 'alf a wreck, scarred an' stove an'
 lame;
Patch 'er up with putty, lads, tie 'er up with twine,
The resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse Line!"

A bit west the Scillies the sky was stormy red;
"To-night we'll lift Saint Agnes' Light if all goes
 well," we said:
But we met a slinkin' submarine as dark was
 comin' down,
An' she ripped our rotten plates away an' left us
 there to drown.

A bit west the Scillies we thought 'er sure to sink,
There was 'alf a gale blowin', the sky was black as
 ink;

The seas begun to mount an' the wind begun to
thunder,
An' every wave that come, oh we thought 'twould
roll 'er under.

But it was "'Ome, dearie, 'ome, an' she gets there
after all—
Steamin' when she can steam, an' when she can't
she'll crawl,
This year, next year, rain or storm or shine,
The resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse Line!"

We thought about the bulk-'eads, we wondered if
they'd last,
An' the cook 'e started groanin' an' repentin' of
the past;
But thinkin' an' groanin', oh they wouldn't shift the
water,
So we got the pumps a-workin', same as British sea-
men oughter.

If she'd been a crack liner, she'd 'ave gone like a
stone,
An' why she didn't sink is a thing as can't be known,
Our arms was made o' lead, our backs was split with
achin',
But we pumped 'er into port just before the day
was breakin'!

THE BALLAD OF THE RESURRECTION PACKET

An' it was "'Ome, dearie, 'ome, oh she'll bring us
'ome some day,
Don't you 'ear the pumps a-clankin' in the old sweet
way?
This year, next year, rain or storm or shine,
She's the resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse
Line!"

LIGHT CRUISERS (OLD)

(Vide Naval Expert's Classification)

WHEN you've marshalled your navies and gloried
your fill

In the latest they show of invention and skill,
The lion in strength and the lizard in speed,
The watchful in waiting, the present in need—
The great Super-Dreadnoughts gigantic and grim,
The thirty-knot cruisers both subtle and slim,
The weight and the range of each wonderful gun—

Remember the cruisers, the out-of-date cruisers,
The creaky old cruisers whose day is not done,
Built some time before Nineteen Hundred and One!

You may look to the South, you may seek in the
North,
You may search from the Falklands as far as the
Forth,
From Pole unto Pole all the oceans between,
Patrolling, protecting, unwearied, unseen,

By night or by noonday the Navy is there,
And the out-of-date cruisers are doing their share;
Yes, anywhere, everywhere under the sun,

You will find an old cruiser, an off-the-map cruiser,
An out-of-date cruiser whose work's never done,
Built some time before Nineteen Hundred and One!

It may be you'll meet with her lending a hand
In clearing a way for the soldiers to land,
Escorting an army, and feeding it too,
Or sinking a raider (and saving her crew);
Blockading by sea or attacking by dry land,
Bombarding a coast or annexing an island,
Where there's death to be daring or risk to be run,

You may look for the cruiser, the out-of-date
cruiser,
The creaky old cruiser that harries the Hun,
Built some time before Nineteen Hundred and One.

In wild nights of winter when warmly you sleep,
She is plugging her way through the dark and the
deep,
With Death in the billows which endless do roll,
And the wind blowing cold with the kiss of the Pole;

While seas slopping over both frequent and green,
Call forth on occasion expressions of spleen,
Of all the old kettles awarding the bun

To the out-of-date cruiser—the obsolete cruiser—
The creaky old cruiser whose work's never done,
Built some time before Nineteen Hundred and One!

And when the day breaks for whose smoke-trail
afar

We scan the grey waters by sunlight and star,
The day of great glory—the splendour, the gloom,
The lightning, the thunder, the judgment, the doom,
The breaking of navies, the shaking of kings,
When the Angel of Battle makes night with his
wings,
Oh somewhere, be sure, in the thick o' the fun

You will find an old cruiser, a gallant old cruiser,
A creaky old cruiser whose day is not done,
Built some time before Nineteen Hundred and One!

II: SONGS IN SAIL

THE COAST OF BARBARY

My lad is on the water and far away from me,
And I pray God be good to him wherever he may be,
Up the sea and down the sea,
And along the coast of Barbary.

Oh, night and day the ships come in, the ships both
great and small,
But never one among them brings a word of him at
all,
From Port o' Spain and Trinidad, from Rio or
Funchal,
And along the coast of Barbary.

If I must think he comes no more across yon seas
forlorn,
If I must think there is no tide may bring him night
or morn,
I'd curse the light that I look on, and the day that I
was born,
And the cruel coast of Barbary.

But well I know that soon or late he'll come back
 blithe and brown,
When the fire's a good thing to see, and the dark
 drawing down,
From many a wild and stormy sea, and many a for-
 eign town,
And along the coast of Barbary.

With a gay silk handkerchief and a parrot red and
 green,
And shells and bits o' things to show from the places
 where he's been,
Up the sea and down the sea,
And along the coast of Barbary.

PARADISE STREET

As I was a-walking down Paradise Street,
A bonny young maiden I chanced for to meet:
She gave me good-morning all as I went by,
With lips full of laughter and love in her eye.
“Here’s wine in a flagon, and white bread and brown,
And a bright pretty parlour where you may sit
down,
A fiddle to dance to, and friends two or three:
Turn again, turn again, lad from the sea!”

As I was a-walking down Paradise Street,
The roses and posies, all blushing and sweet,
They bloomed in the gardens and breathed on the
air,
A breath that smelt fine as the roses were fair.
They said: “Oh, young sailor, why go you so soon
Before the flower’s open that budded in June?
Oh, stay for to-day, before faded we be:
Turn again, turn again, lad from the sea!”

As I was a-walking down Paradise Street,
All out of the westward I heard a wind beat,

All out of the sunset so loudly it blew,
It fluttered the flowers in the gardens that grew,
It shook the green shutters and rattled the pane,
And shrill round the gables it whistled amain.
And the smell it came blowing, yes, blowing to me,
From the white flowers that bloom on the fields of
the sea.

As I was a-walking down Paradise Street,
So heavy my heart grew, so weary my feet,
I said: "I must go, for I hear my friends call,
From the wine and the fiddles and dancing and all.
Oh, keep you your white bread and keep you your
brown,
And by your fireside let some other sit down,
For I hear a ship calling, yes, calling to me:
"Turn again, turn again, lad, to the sea!" "

THE OLD FIDDLE

By Chinese Charley's junk-store, by the Panama
Saloon,

Where 'longshore loafers lean and spit, at morning,
night, and noon,—

All among the keys without a lock, and locks without
a key,

The old boss-eyed binoculars and sextants on the
spree,

New Brummagem and old Bombay a-tumbling side
by side,

A brown bald-headed idol and an "Extra Master's
Guide,"—

Mouldy, musty, dumb and dusty, broken on the
shelf,

I thought I heard the sailor's fiddle singing to itself.

Singing in a queer old quaver, shaky, shrill, and
sad,

Like an old man singing songs he knew when he was
yet a lad,

Singing of a good old time that all too fast did fly,
When the world was rather younger in the years
gone by.

There were scraps of dead old choruses and snatches
of old tunes,
We surely knew in other worlds and under other
moons;
There was singing in the half-deck, and the sky full
o' stars;
And bits o' tipsy shouting out of gaudy, glary
bars;
Little tunes on Chinese fiddles in a quiet street
Full of dinky Chinee houses, where the East and
West do meet;
"Ranzo, Ranzo, Reuben Ranzo"—came the sound
to me
Of a chantey chorus roaring with the roaring sea.

Was it only seagulls piping faint and far away,
All in rows along the freight-sheds where they sit
all day,—
Mewing round the inner harbour where the tugboats
lie—
Or a song we sang together in the years gone by?

There were ships that once I sailed in, sail and
steam, and great and small.

And some were good and some were bad, but, Lord,
I loved 'em all;

There were rusty-red old hookers going plugging
round the world,

And Clyde-built China clippers with their splendid
wings unfurled.

And all the winds of all the seas came singing down
the street,

With its smell of beer and harbour-mud, and tread
of weary feet,

Till I heard the stormy westerlies go thrashing
through the sails,

And the Trades' low thunder, and the Biscay gales.

Was I waking, was I sleeping, did the wet wind go
Thrumming in the slender tops of ships I used to
know,

With the deep-sea glory on them all against a sunset
sky,

On the tide o' dreams a-sailing out of years gone by?

There were faces long forgotten, friends both false
and true

I sailed with once and lost again, the way that sailors
do.

There were folks I loved and lost with smiling faces
all a-shine,

Came and walked a while beside me with a hand in
mine.

Are you dead or living, comrade, near or far away?

Do you ever think of me, lad, friend upon a day?

Late or soon, lad, night or noon, lad, you and I will
meet,

All the seas and years behind us, strolling down the
street.

Was it but the muttering tide that by the wharf
did go,—

Or the footstep of a comrade out of long ago?

Did I only hear the wave lap and the light wind
sigh,—

Or the voices of my shipmates in the years gone by?

By Chinese Charley's junk-store, by the Panama
Saloon,

I walked and talked with shadows there in all the
glare of noon,

Where—among the keys without a lock and locks
without a key,

The old boss-eyed binoculars and sextants on the
spree,

New Brummagem and old Bombay a-tumbling side
by side,

A brown bald-headed idol and an "Extra Master's
Guide,"—

Mouldy, musty, dumb and dusty, broken on the shelf,
I thought I heard the sailor's fiddle singing to itself.

DEEP WATER JACK

Oh, it's "ah, fare you well," for the deep sea's crying,
You thought you could forget it, but it's no use
trying,
Trying to forget it when it calls you so! . . .
Hey, Deep Water Johnnie, kiss your girl and go!

Here's warmth, and soft living, and an easy bed!
It's toil, and much peril, that you're going to in-
stead,
Hard life, and bitter faring, and a poor man's fee
Are all of a man's portion that follows the sea.

But it's "ah, fare you well," the deep sea's calling
Back to cold and hunger and heaving and hauling,
To decks awash and frozen yards, as very well you
know:
But ah, Deep Water Johnnie, kiss your girl and go!

How can a man help it, when the God that made him
Set his feet to follow where the four winds bade him?
—96—

How should a man help it, when his heart goes
jigging

To the sea's song and the sail's song and wind
through the rigging?

And it's "ah, fare you well," for the deep sea's
crying!

You thought you could forget it, but it's no use
trying,

Trying to forget it when it calls you so! . . .

Hey, Deep Water Johnnie, kiss your girl and go!

THE BLUE PETER

LAST night when I left her my true love was weeping
For sorrow at parting, but parting must be:
What use for her tears, and what use to be keeping
A lad by the fireside that follows the sea?
For the cold day's a-breaking, the town hardly wak-
ing,
The moon like a ghost in the pale morning sky,
And the Blue Peter's blowing to tell ye we're going,
And the gulls in the river all calling good-bye!

The last hawser's cast and the tug-whistle's blowing,
The shore growing dim in the mist and the rain:
And wide, very wide, is the world where we're going,
And long, very long, till ye see us again!

Farewell and adieu to ye—still we'll be true to ye,
Still we'll remember wherever we be,—
Hope we'll be meeting ye, hope ye'll be greeting
Some day your sailormen home from the sea !

All in the cold morning, all in the grey weather,
On the sheds and the shipping the rain slating
down,
All hands to the capstan bars, roaring together
A stave for farewell to the folk of the town:
Hong Kong and Vancouver, Callao and Suva,
The Cape and Kowloon, it's a very far cry
From the slow river creeping by houses all sleeping,
And the gulls in the wake of us, calling good-bye!

SHIPMATES

GOOD-BYE and fare ye well; for we'll sail no more
together,

Broad seas and narrow in fair and foul weather:

We'll sail no more together in foul weather or fine,
And ye'll go your own way, and I'll go mine.

Oh, the seas are very wide, and there's never any
knowing

The countries we'll see or the ports where we'll be
going,

All across the wide world, up and down the sea,
Before we come together, as at last may be.

Good-bye and fare ye well—and maybe I'll be
strolling

And watching the ships there and the crews a-coal-
ing,

In a queer foreign city and a gay gaudy street;

And who but yourself will I chance there for to
meet?

You'll blow up from Eastward, and I'll blow in from
West,
And of all the times we ever had, it's then we'll have
the best,
Back from deep sea wanderings, back from wind and
weather,
You and me from all the seas, two friends together!

Good-bye and fare ye well: may nought but good
attend ye
All across the wide world where sailor's luck may
send ye,
Up and down the deep seas, north and south the
Line,
And ye'll go your own way, and I'll go mine!

A SEA BURTHEN

A SHIP swinging
As the tide swings, up and down,
And men's voices singing, . . .
East away O! West away!
And a very long way from London Town!

A lantern glowing
And the stars looking down,
And the sea smells blowing, . . .
East away O! West away!
And a very long way from London Town!

Lights in wild weather
From a tavern window old and brown,
And men singing together, . . .
East away O! West away!
And a very long way from London Town!

SACRAMENTO

'Frisco City's grand and gay
 (Sacramento, Sacramento!)
And the roaring night's as bright as day!
And many ships go, small and great,
In and out by the Golden Gate,
 (And away O! Sacramento!)

Who was it called across the night?
 (Sacramento, Sacramento!)
What was it flashed so keen and bright?
Who is it drives down 'Frisco tide
With a six-inch blade deep in his side?
 (And away O! Sacramento!)

Oh, don't you see Blue Peter flying?
 (Sacramento, Sacramento!)
Oh, don't you hear the good wind crying?
Oh, don't you hear the capstan chorus
And smell the open sea before us?
 (And away O! Sacramento!)

We'll miss you, running easting down
 (Sacramento, Sacramento!)
With a following wind from 'Frisco town:
We'll miss you beating off the Horn,
One man less at the pumps forlorn
 (And away O! Sacramento!)

No more time to spend on grieving
 (Sacramento, Sacramento!)
All because o' the man we're leaving:
The salt tides drive his drownéd bones
In and out o' the Farallones
 (And away O! Sacramento!)

CAPE STIFF

CRUEL is the sea, and the hardest thing of all
Is her taking and her leaving, and the way it seems
to fall,
How always it's the best men who have to hear the
call . . .

Ah, Cape Stiff, and the big seas pouring!
And of all good sailormen that use the deep sea
Where would you find a better or a truer lad than
he
That we lost in the dirty weather from the fourmast
barque *Tralee*
By Cape Stiff, and the great gale roaring?

It was all hands on deck that night, to heave her to;
The sails were frozen hard, the cold wind bit you
through,
You couldn't hear a man beside you speak, so loud
it blew,
Near Cape Stiff, and her yards dipping
under!

The night was black as hell . . . I never saw him
go . . .

It wasn't till the dawn broke I'd time to ask and
know

The sea that swept us out and back had rolled him
far below

By Cape Stiff, in the great seas' thunder.

And fair weather or foul weather it's all one to him,
Though the sea's in the half-deck and the empty
bunk aswim,

It's a long watch below for weary head and aching
limb

By Cape Stiff, and the loud wind crying!

And now we're rolling home before the good Trade
Wind,

But I'm thinking night and day how we've left him
far behind—

Him that was so merry, him that was so kind,

By Cape Stiff, in the cold deeps lying!

THE LONG ROAD HOME

THERE'S a wind up and a sighing along the water-
side,
And we're homeward bound at last on to-night's full
tide:
Round the world and back again is very far to
roam . . .
And San Juan Strait to England, it's a long road
home!

We'll tow out to Flattery before the sun is high:
We'll shake the harbour dust away and give the land
good-bye:
And singing in her topsails, O, the deep-sea wind'll
come,
And lift us through it lively on the long road home.

The old man he goes smiling, for he's gathered in a
crew:
We've various Turks and infidels, we've most things
but a Jew:

He's got the pick of all the stiff's from Panama to
Nome,
And we'll make 'em into sailors on the long road
home.

The leaves that just are open now, they'll have to
fade and fall,
There'll be reaping time and threshing time and
ploughing time and all:
But we'll not see the harvest fields nor smell the fresh-
cut loam:

We'll be rolling gun'le under on the long road home.

We've waited for a cargo and we've waited for a
crew,

And last we've waited for a tide, and now the wait-
ing's through:

Oh, don't you hear the deep-sea wind and smell the
deep-sea foam,

Out beyond the harbour on the long road home?

And it's "home, dearie, home" when the anchor rat-
tles down

In the reek of good old Mersey fog a-rolling rich
and brown:

Round the world and back again is very far to
roam . . .

And all the way to England it's a long road home!

THE LOST SHIP

COME you up from southward, oh, come you there—
away?

And saw you not my ship there that's late now many
a day?

And touched you ne'er a port where she came
a-sailing thither?

Where's the barque *Aurora* and all her people with
her?

Ah, good-bye and fare you well now, ship and sailor:
Ah, good-bye, for never harbour more shall hail her:
Ask the unsleeping drift if still it lifts her westing,
Or the Tuscarora Deeps if there she's resting.

Home, come home: it is no use at all to linger:
Never will be tide so late that it will bring her:
Salt like tears the scud is, cold the sea tides
streaming:

Never will you greet your man but in your dreaming.

Ask the roaring Norther: ask the berg that broke
her:

Ask the growlers of the Horn where last they spoke
her.

Ask the seas that, pouring through the splintered
hatches,

Last relieved for good and all her labouring watches.

Ask the crazy gale that, hither-thither shifting,
Snatched the last tired chantey stave their lips were
lifting.

Ask the Austral lights that in their dances reeling
Mocked across the empty skies her flares' appealing.

Ask the lonely dawn that, scarlet, silent, splendid,
Looked across the world and found the fight was
ended.

Ask the wind and wave that bruised and broke and
shook her . . .

And the sea's great silence at the last that took her.

THE OLD WHALE

WHEN I'm growing old (if I'm getting tired of sailing
Up and down the seas, and alway: finding some-
thing new),

When I come to feel the sight and strength of me are
failing,

Maybe I'll curl up then, as the old whales do.

When I live on land, and never feel the fret and fever

Pull me back to seaward (as may one day be),

When I hear my old bones saying that it's time for
me to leave her,

Maybe I'll curl up then ashore, and leave the sea!

I'll grow a few flowers then; I'll have a few friends
nigh me,

Lie soft, and never care for all the winds that
blow;

Eat, and sleep, and smoke, and let the hours go by
me,

In the little easy ways that old men know.

Or sit by a winter fire, and tell the old tales over,

Listen for a shipmate's step coming to the door,

Talk of men and ships I knew, from Torres Strait to
 Dover,
 And . . . maybe the heart of me'll be happy on
 the shore:

Maybe I'll forget then how, when I was younger
 (Pleasant folks about me, and my girl's kiss on my
 lip),
 When I'd been a month or less on land I'd feel the
 hunger
 Drive me through the ports again, looking for a
 ship.
 Maybe then the shore things won't seem stale: and I
 won't waken
 In the night and think of all my friends forgetting
 me,
 Nor know (when it's too late to know) how sore I
 was mistaken
 Curling up ashore there with my heart at
 sea!

III: SONGS OF HOME

A MESSAGE

It was about the midnight hour,
 I heard the wind go by:
I heard on the wet mould the shower
 Beat, and the bare trees sigh.
I heard your hand upon the pane,
 Your footstep at the door,
A moment lingering in the rain,
 And then . . . no more!

One moment . . . then the door was wide,
 Yet none there was to hark,
Nor any answer when I cried
 Your name across the dark.
There was none there . . . although I knew
 Your footstep, ah, so plain!—
Only the weary wind that blew,
 And the driving rain!

Was there no sign you could have brought,
 No word that you might say,
To tell what thing it was you sought,
 And you so far away?

They say I heard but the rain fall
And the wind beat . . . yet I,
Should I not know your step, though all
The world went by?

NEWS FROM THE NORTH

As I went down by London Bridge
 (And I not long on land),
I met a lad from the North Country,
 And gripped him by the hand,

And said: "If you be late from home,
 Oh, quickly tell me true
How fares it now with mine own country
 And with the folk I knew?"

Oh, he looked up and he looked down,
 And slow he shook his head,
And, "Sure the place is not the same
 This many a year," he said.

"For this one's dead, and that one's wed,
 And that gone oversea:
You scarce would know the place again
 So many changes be."

"Tell me no more, no more," I cried,
 "This grievous news and ill:

Full well I know, where'er you go
The round world stands not still.

"For folk must die and folk must wive,
Since change and chance must be
Alike for those who bide at home
And those who use the sea.

"Tell me if anything I'll find
I knew and loved before:
Do the trees stand up by Oakenclough,
The winds blow off the Moor?

"Do magpies in our planting build,
And hares by Blackbrook run,
And at Top o' th' Lowe the grasses blow
All ruddy in the sun?"

"Still runs the brook, the trees stand up
By yonder cloughside still:
You can see the roof of your father's barn
Look over the windy hill."

"There will I go, and there shall meet
Old ghosts of joy and pain,
And the folk I knew in the time that's gone
Shall greet me once again.

"The lad that's dead, the lad that's wed,
With me shall leap and run,
As they did when we were boys at home
Ere roving days begun.

"There is no land so lone and far,
There is no sea so wide,
There is no grave so deep that there
Shall they unheeding bide,
When the winds that blow in mine own country
Do call them to my side!"

A GARDEN IN THE NORTH

YESTREEN I walked where wind and tree
Called all the lost years back to me,
Where shaken leaf and waft of bird
Spoke to me each its well-known word.

I knew—ah, well I knew of old
The wet earth and the sky's pale gold,
The light wind stirring restlessly
The brown leaf on the beechen tree.

I knew the far grey line of hills
Behind the barn—the daffodils
Beneath the bare bough putting forth
Their spears' brave challenge to the north.

What more? Only the joy, the pain,
Shadows and dreams that waked again
(As in these barren boles the Spring
Wakes at the west wind's summoning):
—120—

Only the drift of thorn leaves dry
That stirred and sighed as I went by,
As if some page I turned, and read
There an old tale of years long fled.

And the wise wind that keeps alway
The lost sweet soul of yesterday
Brought to me on its whispering breath
Love, hope, remembrance—Life and Death!

GHOSTS IN THE GARDEN

It needs not in the owl-light grey
Hither to creep with mystic rune,
Nor yet in shuddering stealth to pay
Lip-service to the freakish moon.
Here is no spell to sing or say;
Ghosts in the garden walk by day.

Where spreads its wide and plummy wings
The stormy sunset's weeping gold,
To these lone walks their presence clings,
Their footsteps stir the last year's mould
Whose vapour, faint like incense, brings
The fragrance of forgotten Springs.

It may be, nought is seen or heard
Save sights and sounds that well may be
But passing of a vagrant bird,
But shadow of a shaken tree:
By presence seen, or spoken word,
The haunted stillness is not stirred.

Yet o'er the leaf-drift wet and brown,

E'en now, some lingering footfall past,
And where yon late-blown rose's crown

On Summer's forehead clung the last,
The waft of some dead lady's gown
Brought the sweet ruin shattering down.

ALL HALLOWS

ALL on the autumn woods the mist lay white and
chill ;

And I heard the rising wind come piping down the
hill,

And the stream sigh o'er the shallows

On the Eve of All Hallows

When the house was still.

I did not set the door wide, no meal did I spread,

Neither a cup of water nor a platter of bread,

They came without my calling

When the night was falling,

From the days that are dead.

No dog barked at their passing from the silent fold ;

There was no step on the doorsill nor print on the
damp mould

To tell the world to-morrow

I supped with love and sorrow

Ere the hearth grew cold.

Dear dreams of years departed, kind ghosts of
vanished days,

Slipped in then to the firelight, stretched their hands
to the blaze,

Lost voices whispered nigh me,

Loved footsteps lingered by me

Ere they went their ways.

I heard a bird crying along the lonely hill,

I heard the stream sighing and the wind piping shrill

Across the frosty fallows . . .

On the eve of All Hallows

When the house was still.

IV: SONGS OF THE WILD

FRASER RIVER

FRASER river's flooding high,
Cold and deep and cruel flowing,
All lonely stand the hills thereby,
And a man may drown and no one knowing.

Oh, if you heard a shot by night,
Heed not, for it nothing strange is:
What but a hunter should it be
Scaring the wolves along the ranges?

And if beside a mountain trail
One man less a camp is sharing,
No way new is it for men
To come and go and no one caring.

Oh, let you ask now near and far:
Oh, let you ask both here and yonder:
What was he but a roving man,
And who can say where such may wander?

If a thing be gone it comes no more!

If a thing's lost there's none shall find it
Where Fraser river's roaring down
With the weight of all the snows behind it.

And Fraser river's full in flood,

Deep and cold and cruel flowing,
All lonely is the land thereby,
And a man may drown and no one knowing. . .

THE PLAINS OF MEXICO

THERE'S a country wide and weary, and a scorching
sun looks down
On the thirsty cattle ranges and a queer old Spanish
town,
And it's there my heart goes roving by the trails I
used to know,
Dusty trails by camps deserted where the tinkling
mule-trains go,
On the sleepy sunlit ranges, and the plains of
Mexico.

Is it only looking backward that the past seems now
so fair?
Was the sun then somehow brighter, was there some-
thing in the air
Made no day seem ever weary, never hour that went
too slow
When we rode the dusty ranges on the plains of
Mexico?

Then the long hot-scented evenings, and the fiddle's
squeaky tune,
When we danced with Spanish lasses underneath the
golden moon,
Girls with names all slow and splendid, hot as fire and
cold as snow,
In the spicy summer night-time on the plains of
Mexico.

I am growing tired and lonely, and the town is dull
and strange:
I am restless for the open sky, and wandering winds
that range:
I will get me forth a-roving, I will get me out and go,
But no more, no more my road is to the plains of
Mexico.

For the sun is on the plateau, and the dusty trails go
down
By the same old cactus hedges to the sleepy Spanish
town,
But I'll never find my comrade that I lost there long
ago,
Never, never more (Oh, lad I loved and left a-lying
low!)
Where the coward bullet took him on the plains of
Mexico!

ALONG THE PRAIRIE TRAIL

I KNOW it's only dreaming, and it never may be more,
But I'm thinking, as I have done many and many a
time before,
That some day I'll be standing here and leaning on
the rail,
And look, and see you coming along the prairie trail.

Oh, first I'd think perhaps I took some other one for
you,
And then I'd be afraid to wake and find it wasn't
true,
And there'd be sweet flowers everywhere, and singing
on the gale,
When I went out to greet you along the prairie trail.

I'd have my hands in yours then, and you'd have hold
of mine:
I'd look, and look again, and drink the sight of you
like wine,

And ah! we'd have so much to say that all our words
would fail

When you came up to meet me along the prairie
trail.

I daresay dreams are folly (but sometimes they
come true),

And after all is said, it's just a pleasant thing to do,
To stand, as I do now, and watch the sunset sky
grow pale,

And think you're coming yonder along the prairie
trail.

PRAIRIE WIND

I LOOKED out as the dusk fell on the prairie vast
and wide,

There was no dog that barked there, nor any tree
that sighed:

Silence, and nought but silence, was there on every
hand,

But for the lone wind blowing over the lone land.

But for the voice of the lonely places, wandering by
Between the vast and empty earth and the star-sown
sky,

From the wrinkled flanks of the mountains where the
eagle rears her brood,

And screams from her wild eyrie to the barren soli-
tude.

But for the voice from the ramparts where hasten
down alone

Cold and unforded rivers flowing to seas unknown,
And the lost ranges where never a white man's foot
has trod,

And lakes in deep hill-hollows look lonely up to God.

But for the ancient burthen of the long uncounted
years

In far untravelled gorges where the waiting echo
hears

Only the cougar hunting by night, and the eagle's
cry,

And the lone wind blowing under the lone sky.

PRAIRIE SUNSET

WHERE the Great Chief's sullen crest
Looks over the land,
The splendour floods from the west,
Ruddied and grand.

Like a vast Armada's wrecked
And ravaged pride,
Reeling over a flecked
And crimsoned tide.

Or a cachalot lashing the spray
In his wounded throe,
On a South sea far away
Where the whalers go.

Till the light is gone, and the skies
Are cold and dree
As a blue gulf in the ice
Of a Polar sea.

THE OLD-TIMER

TIMES, they say, must change, and folks must change
with 'em too:

That's how it is in the West, now the old lights
seem to fail:

The prairie that was is passing, and giving place to
the new,—

Give me again the old times, and the buffalo trail!

Give me again the great days between earth and
sky,

The red roaring nights, the blood that leapt like a
flame,

Men that were men, friends that were friends in the
years gone by,

Life that held more than dollars to make it worthy
the name.

Give me again the hot hours by the old corral,—

Bill on the pinto, and Pat on the buckskin, and me
on the bay,—

The flurry of unshod hoofs, the voices,—where are
they all,

Horses and men, and the good glad hours that
were yesterday?

Do you remember?—but only the prairie wind
replies:

“Yesterday’s gone like a gleam, and here is To-day
with its change:

Here with its new towns growing from nothing under
your eyes,

And the scar of the settler’s plough on the last of
the cattle range.

Yesterday’s gone, with all that was in it of good and
of bad,

Gone like a hunt that’s over, a song that’s sung:
Give me again laughter and life and the heart of a
lad,

Give me again the old times . . . when the world
was young!”

THE CIRCUS IN THE WEST

ALL through the little prairie town
'Mid dusty levels broad and brown
 I saw the Circus pacing on;
I felt its vague barbaric spell,
I smelt the queer old circus smell
 As old as Rome or Babylon.

The tinsel gleamed, the big drum rolled,
The ponies pranced and caracoled
 In gaudy gilt caparison;
And still beneath it was the strange
Sad undertone of Time and Change,—
 As erst in vanished Babylon.

I saw where, wrinkled, grey and wise,
With swaying gait and brooding eyes,
 The elephants went pacing on,
Unmoved amid the gaping throng,
As if they only thought: "How long—
 How far from here to Babylon?"

No longer than this restless hour,
Its lust and folly, pride and power,
 To-day as in the ages gone:
No further than this feverish, queer,
New town which was not yesteryear
 Need mankind seek for Babylon.

New towns in strange new lands arise;
But old as earth and stars and skies
 The Circus of the world goes on;
Still travelling on its ancient round
Where'er man's dust of dreams is found—
 Here—now—to-day—in Babylon.

V: ROMANCE

ROMANCE

MORN, and a world of wonder! Oh, the time
Of winds like trumpet calls, and seas that gleam,
And sounding sunlit roads that wind and climb
Far over hills of dream,—

Travelled by knight and pedlar, prince and priest,
Past many an echoing port and ringing bridge,
To some black fortress like a couchant beast
Crouched on a mountain ridge,—

Fords perilous, and haunted reach and pool,
Far-shining spires under the blaze of noon,
And twilight shrines of visions wonderful,
Dusk, and an angry moon.

Glimmer of ambush—dungeons, strange escapes,
Ships swinging on the swell of darkling tides,
And faerie forests full of eerie shapes,
Long, flickering, grass-grown rides.

Dark crooked streets with lights like peering eyes,

Plotters in half-lit halls of palaces,

Orchards and gardens full of lurking spies,

And whispering passages.

Travail and bondage, battle-flags unfurled,

Earth at the prime, and God earth's wrongs above,

Honour and hope, youth and the beckoning world,

Peril and war and love!

MORGAN LE FAY

I WILL put by my violent days, and the ill deeds that
I wrought,
All wayward sins of a wild heart, all empty joys I
sought,
I will forswear the fruitless year and the deedless day,
And the long gold tresses and false caresses of
Morgan le Fay.

The songs are hollow and empty: the wine is down
to the lees:
I am full sick of the witching dance and unclean
mysteries:
And the palace of magic and wonder just an ill
shadow seems,
Wild feasts and vile faces out of evil dreams.

There shall no sleep come nigh me all through the
long night,
Where I watch mine arms alone for a space ere I
ride forth to fight,

Alone with the cold altar and the cross of my slain
Lord,
With the stark helm and the grey mail and the cross-
hilted sword.

I have bound the spur to my heel again: I have rent
the past like a scroll:
In the bitter waters of sorrow will I wash clean my
soul.
I have put by the worthless world and the deedless
day,
And the long gold tresses and false caresses of Mor-
gan le Fay.

RONCEVAL

O woe's me, ye people,
And woe, brave warriors all,
For the flower of all princes
Dead on Ronceval.

There lie many stark fighters
That with brave Roland rode—
Rinaldo of the White Thorn,
Ogier and Galdebode.

And Roland, ah, Roland,
That was first of them all,
Lieth among his captains
On red Ronceval.

Queens weep for Roland,
Kings go heavily:
There was none in Christendom
Better loved than he.

Prince of all courtesy,
Very true and kind:

Tears are in the dwellings
Of Kaiser and of hind.

For herdsmen have hearkened,
Keeping sheep on the hill,
To a sound like the wind's crying—
Yet all winds are still.

It is the horn of Roland
Nevermore shall call—
That mourneth for slain armies
On red Ronceval.

THE WATERS OF OBLIVION

I HAD ridden far from the battle, from the red wrack,
and the last
Lost hope that had clung to hope till the shadow of
hope was past,
From the stream that ran blood, not water, and the
grief that burned like fire
For the cause lying trodden down and down in the
battle-mire.

I had not washen my sweat off, nor the red stain o'
the field;
I could scarce bear up my battered harness and
dinted shield.
Spent was I, clean forspent, and my heart like lead
in my breast,
And the very bones o' my body yearned and hungered
for rest.

Then, through the dusty byways, while yet the West
was aflame
Like a plundered city with sunset, at the end of even
I came,

Heart-weary and body-weary, with my wounds both
many and deep,
To the well that is called Oblivion, to the quiet
waters of sleep.

Rosy it brimmed in the twilight, redder and fairer
than wine,
Cold in a grey stone hollow I saw it dimple and
shine:
And of all that a man might dream and desire, then
seemed it the best
To drink, and be no more thirsty, lie down and for
ever to rest.

I looked my last on the sunset ere my dry lips drank
their fill,
I bade good-bye to the earth and sky and the windy
hill:
And all I had fought and lost for, all I had loved
and known,
Came back and lingered beside me where I knelt by
the pool alone.

A bird cried o'er the pastures, a weak wind wakened
and stirred,
Rustling the dusty wayside weed like a stealthy step
half-heard:

And the well that slept in a silence deep as the
dreamless years
On a sudden sobbed in the stillness with a sound like
human tears.

Old trumpets pealed in the twilight; lost war-cries
rang as of old:
And I looked where the night mist gathered ghostly
and grey, and behold!
Squadron on squadron, rank upon rank in the dark-
ening sky,
Saw as it were my comrades muster, and heard them
cry:

“You will sleep sound, our comrade: never, never
again
Will you ride out for a cause forlorn, in the wind
and rain.
And the din and thunder of battle shall be in your
ears no more
Than the sigh of a lost wave breaking on a far-off
shore.

All that was bitter and weary, all that was grievous
and hard,
You shall put off as a garment, and cast away as a
shard.

All that was gallant and goodly—the splendour, the
glory, the gleam,
Shall pass away as a tale forgotten, or a long past
dream.

Laid aside as a burthen, as a child's sorrow forgot,
Though morn and even clamour the trumpets: 'Why
comes he not—
He who was once our comrade—he whose slumber is
deep
By the well which is called Oblivion, by the quiet
waters of Sleep?"

Win or lose, what matter at all, when the unheeding
hand
Never gropes through the mist of sleep for the rusted
brand?
What matter when never the dreaming heart nor the
drowsy eye
Quickens because he remembers the great old days
gone by?"

'Ah, God, I was weary . . . weary, and wounded,
and sore athirst:
But I turned from the clear cold waters, my heart
knew them accurst:

And I rode in my dinted armour, with my wounds
both many and deep,
From the well that is called Oblivion, from the quiet
waters of Sleep.

LOVE'S MARKETING

ALONG the lanes from market
Folk went by:
White along the river-side
Mist did lie:
Hob rode the grey mare,
Rob rode the roan:
Then met I a stranger lad
Trudging alone.

"How, pray you, tell me,
Did the market go?
Sold you your wares there
High or low?"
All in the dusty lane
Tears did fall:
"Love the Fool, Love the Fool,
Men me call!

"Gold for the bay colt,
Gold for the brown,
For the goodwife's dairying

A fine new gown:
Silver for the sweet herbs
That in the gardens grow:
What for love, what for love?
Nought but woe.

"Some sell for money,
Some for kind:
What though your wares be
All left behind!
Ah, me, the bare board!
Ah, the chill morrow! . . .
Love the Fool, Love the Fool,
Sells for sorrow!"

